

REMARKS

This is in response to the Office Action that was mailed on July 7, 2006. Claim 1 is amended to recite a feature from claim 8. Claim 8 is accordingly cancelled, without prejudice. Claim 1 is also amended in accordance with the disclosure to recite relevant aspects of the processing which imparts novel beneficial features to the claimed structure. The Examiner will note that this aspect of present claim 1 parallels claim 1 in US 6,682,677 B2, the patent which issued from the parent of the present divisional application. Claim 7 is amended similarly to claim 1. No new matter is added to the application by this Amendment. Claims 1-7 remain pending in the application.

Claims 1-5 and 7 were rejected under 35 USC § 102(e) as being anticipated by US 6,299,812 B1 (Newman). Claims 1-5 and 7 were rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Newman. These rejections are respectfully traversed. The structures described by Newman are composites. In contrast, the structures claimed herein are, e.g., entangled fibers, free from any matrix material. Hence the presently claimed structures differ significantly from the structures disclosed by Newman. Various disclosed features of the invention have been added to independent claims 1 and 7 in order to highlight the distinctions between the respective technologies. It is respectfully submitted that the claims in their current form are neither taught nor suggested by the Newman reference.

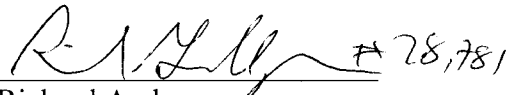
Claim 8 was rejected under 35 USC §§ 102(b)-103(a) over Liu et al., *Science*, 280:1253-1256 (1998). Inasmuch as claim 8 has been cancelled, this ground of rejection is moot.

All rejections of record have been obviated by arguments and amendments of the claims or rendered moot. Accordingly the Examiner is respectfully requested to pass this divisional application to Issue. If there are any questions, the Examiner is invited to contact Richard Gallagher (Registration No. 28,781) at (703) 205-8008.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to our Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under § 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

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Respectfully submitted,

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